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Overcoming Discouragement

By Mark Legendre

There is a story in 1st Samuel 30 where the Amalekites came to the city of Ziklag where David and some of his men were away from the city on business. The wives and children were taken captive and the city was burned. Verse 4 says, "Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep." Verse 6 says the following: "And David was greatly distressed; for the people spoke of stoning him, because the souls of all the people were grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: BUT DAVID ENCOURAGED HIMSELF IN THE LORD HIS GOD." He did this by inquiring at the Lord for help. In other words, he looked to God's word when he was discouraged. How often do you as a Christian do this today when you find yourself discouraged?

God's word gives tremendous encouragement to those who will listen to it. For example we read in 1st Peter 5:7 that we are to "cast all our care upon Him, for He careth for you." Hebrews 13:5-6 says: "... I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what men shall do unto me." Romans 8:31 says "... If God be for us, who can be against us?" The next time you find yourself a little discouraged, turn to God's word with renewed thirst, and you will gain the needed strength.

What Shall We Do...?

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"WITH THE PAST!"

1. LEARN FROM IT!(Rom. 15:4, 1 Cor. 10:1-11)

- We should learn from the past so that we "do not make the same mistakes that others have made."
- We "don't have to learn the hard way;" we can profit from the experience of others.

2. Forget About It! (Phil.3:13)

- this may seem like a contradiction to the first point, but it is simply "looking at the past from a different perspective."
- We can't allow ourselves to "rest on our past successes; we must forget about them and continue to work hard in the future to accomplish even more!"

3. Be Motivated By It! (1 Cor. 15:8-10)

- We can't let the past be a "stumbling block to what we might accomplish in the future."
- Paul didn't let "his past mistakes become a hindrance to his work as an apostle of Jesus Christ." (1 Tim.1:12-16, Acts 9:13-14)
- We "must let go of the past, forgive ourselves for the mistakes that we made, and be more determined in the future not to make the same mistakes again."

4. Forgive And Forget It! (Heb.10:15-18)

- If we are going to be "truly like our Father in Heaven and like our Savior Jesus Christ, then we must learn to forgive and forget!" (Ez. 18:20-22, Eph. 4:31-32, Col. 3:13)
- We must "treat others the way that we would like to be treated." (Mt. 7:12, Gal. 6:1)

CONCLUSION

Even though the "past is in the past, and we cannot change it, we can profit from it by learning all there is to learn from it!" (Rom. 15:4)

WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH YOUR PAST?